

**What is Claimed:**

- 1           1.     A tool for preparing the vertebral bodies for an implant  
2 comprising:  
3                     a cutter having,  
4                     a forked end having two tines,  
5                     a first cutting blade located on an inner side of each of  
6                     the tines, and  
7                     a second cutting blade located on an outer side of each  
8                     of the tines.
- 1           2.     The tool according to claim 1 wherein the first cutting blades are  
2 inboard of the second cutting blades.
- 1           3.     The tool according to claim 1 wherein the second cutting blades  
2 are placed further apart than the first cutting blades.
- 1           4.     The tool according to claim 1 wherein the two tines have  
2 beveled leading edges.
- 1           5.     The tool according to claim 1 further having a blade protector.
- 1           6.     The tool according to claim 5 wherein the blade protector is  
2 retractable.
- 1           7.     The tool according to claim 1 wherein the upper cutting blades  
2 are coplanar with the inner side of each tine.
- 1           8.     The tool according to claim 1 wherein the first pair of cutting  
2 blades are coplanar with the outer side of each tine.
- 1           9.     The tool according to claim 1 wherein the first and second pairs  
2 of blades are positioned and adapted to bypass nerves.

1           10.    The tool of claim 1 wherein the tines have inboard and outboard  
2 beveled surfaces that converge and the upper cutting blades have surfaces  
3 that are continuous with the inboard beveled surfaces and the lower cutting  
4 blades have surfaces that are continuous with the outboard beveled surfaces.

1           11.    The tool of claim 1 wherein the first pair of cutting blades are  
2 upper cutting blades and the second pair of cutting blades are lower cutting  
3 blades.

1           12.    The tool of claim 1 wherein the second pair of cutting blades are  
2 lower cutting blades positioned and adapted to bypass nerves.

1           13.    A tool for preparing the vertebral bodies for an implant  
2 comprising:

3                   a cutter having,  
4                   a forked end having two tines, and  
5                   an upper cutting blade located on an inner side of each of  
6           the tines.

1           14.    The tool according to claim 13, the cutter further comprising:  
2                   a lower cutting blade located on an outer side of each of  
3           the tines.

1           15.    The tool according to claim 13 wherein the tool has a handle at  
2 a distal end.

1           16.    The tool according to claim 15 wherein the handle is a  
2 removable handle.

1           17.    The tool according to claim 13 wherein the two tines have  
2 beveled leading edges.

1           18.    The tool according to claim 13 further having a blade protector.

1           19.    The tool according to claim 18 wherein the blade protector is  
2 retractable.

1           20.    The tool according to claim 13 wherein the upper cutting blades  
2 are coplanar with an inner surface of each tine.

1           21.    The tool according to claim 14 wherein the lower cutting blades  
2 are coplanar with an outer surface of each tine.

1           22.    The tool according to claim 14 wherein the upper and lower  
2 blades are positioned and adapted to bypass a pair of nerves.

1           23.    A tool for preparing the vertebral bodies for an implant  
2 comprising:

3                   a cutter having,  
4                   a forked end having two tines, and  
5                   a lower cutting blade located on an outer side of each of  
6           the tines.

1           24.    The tool according to claim 23, the cutter further comprising:  
2                   an upper cutting blade located on an inner side of each of  
3           the tines.

1           25.    The tool according to claim 24 wherein the upper cutting blades  
2 are inboard of the lower cutting blades.

1           26.    The tool according to claim 24 wherein the lower cutting blades  
2 are spread further apart than the upper cutting blades.

1           27.    The tool according to claim 23 wherein the two tines have  
2 beveled lead in edges.

1           28.    The tool according to claim 23 further having a blade protector.

1           29.    The tool according to claim 28 wherein the blade protector is  
2 retractable.

1           30.    The tool according to claim 24 wherein the upper cutting blades  
2 are coplanar with the inner side of each tine.

1           31.    The tool according to claim 23 wherein the lower cutting blades  
2 are coplanar with the outer side of each tine.

1           32.    The tool according to claim 24 wherein the upper and lower  
2 blades are positioned and adapted to bypass a pair of nerves.

1           33.    A method of implanting an artificial disk between adjacent  
2 vertebrae comprising the steps of:

3                   accessing first and second adjacent vertebrae;  
4                   simultaneously preparing a first pair of slots in the first  
5                   vertebra and a second pair of slots in the second vertebra; and  
6                   implanting keels of the artificial disk in the first pair of  
7                   slots and in the second pair of slots.

1           34.    The method of claim 33 including the step of:  
2                   preparing the first pair of slots to be closer together than  
3                   the second pair of slots.

1           35.    The method of claim 33 including the step of:  
2                   preparing the first pair of slots to be inboard of the second  
3                   pair of slots.

1           36.    The method of claim 33 including the step of using a tool with  
2 first and second tines that are positioned in the disk space between the first  
3 and second vertebrae with a first blade that creates one of the first slots  
4 located on an upper surface of each tine and a second blade that can create  
5 one of the second slots located on a lower surface of each tine.

1           37.    The method of claim 33 wherein the implant includes a first pair  
2 of upper and lower implant parts and a second pair of upper and lower implant  
3 parts, including the steps of:

4                    using a tool to hold the first pair of implants and placing  
5 the first pair of implants simultaneously in one of the first pair of  
6 slots and one of the second pair of slots; and

7                    using a tool to hold the second pair of implants and  
8 placing the second pair of implants simultaneously in the other  
9 of the first pair of slots and the other of the second pair of slots.

1           38.    A method of implanting an artificial disk between adjacent  
2 vertebrae comprising the steps of:

3                    accessing upper and lower adjacent vertebrae;

4                    simultaneously preparing a first pair of inboard upper  
5 slots in the upper vertebra and a second pair of outboard lower  
6 slots in the second vertebra; and

7                    implanting keels of the artificial disk in the first pair of  
8 slots and in the second pair of slots.

1           39.    The method of claim 38 including the step of using a tool with  
2 first and second tines that are positioned in the disk space between the first  
3 and second vertebra with a first blade that creates one of the first slots located  
4 on an upper surface of each tine and a second blade that can create one of  
5 the second slots located on a lower surface of each tine.

1           40.    The method of claim 38 wherein the implant includes a first pair  
2 of upper and lower implant parts and a second pair of upper and lower implant  
3 parts, including the steps of:

4                    using a tool to hold the first pair of implants and placing  
5 the first pair of implants simultaneously in one of the first pair of  
6 slots and one of the second pair of slots; and

7                    using a tool to hold the second pair of implants and  
8                    placing the second pair of implants simultaneously in the other  
9                    of the first pair of slots and the other of the second pair of slots.

1            41.    A kit for installing an intervertebral implant including:  
2                    an implant having an upper part and a lower part;  
3                    a cutting tool; and  
4                    an implanting insertion tool.

1            42.    The kit of claim 41 including the cutting tool and further including  
2                    first and second tines with an upper cutter on each tine and a lower cutter on  
3                    each tine, with the upper cutters located inboard of the lower cutters.

1            43.    The kit of claim 41 including the implant and further including a  
2                    pair of upper and lower parts on the implant and a second pair of upper and  
3                    lower parts, wherein the implant insertion tool includes a device that can hold  
4                    and insert the first pair of upper and lower parts.

1            44.    The kit of claim 43 including another implant insertion tool that  
2                    can hold and insert the second pair of upper and lower parts.

1            45.    The kit of claim 41 wherein the implant includes a ball and  
2                    socket structure.

1            46.    The kit of claim 41 wherein the implant includes a ball and  
2                    socket structure as part of the upper and lower parts.